

Social Environment Indicators for Assessing Human Health and Well-being in Urban Landscape

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I. Introduction

With the present trend of urbanization in the twenty-first century, more cities are being developed, resulting in a growing number of people moving to metropolitan regions for a better quality of life. Subsequently, a slew of urban issues including environmental, social, and economic ones emerge, all of which have an impact on the health of the urban dwellers.

Although cities should have the facilities for the convenience of the citizens, they also need to have a significant amount of natural green space which is beneficial for the health and well-being of the citizens. However, since the presence of natural green spaces would not be enough, it is vital to identify and research the various indicators that can motivate people to use urban green spaces more actively. On this wise, since the urban landscape has an important effect on the health and well-being of human, various characteristics of it should be discussed in order to satisfy the needs of citizens in urban landscape design.

This study discusses various social indicators that exist in the urban landscape and analyzes the effects that each can have on people's physical and mental health and well-being.

II. Literature Review

Urbanization is one of the leading global trends of the 21st century that has a significant impact on health (World Health Organization, 2018). According to statistics, in 1800, only 3% of the world's population lived in cities (Barbara Boyle Torrey, 2004), yet WHO suggests that currently over 55% of the world's population live in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 68% by 2050 (World Health Organization, 2018). While urban life continues to offer many opportunities,

including potential access to better health care, today's urban environments can concentrate health risks and introduce new hazards (City and Assessment, 2010). In result, all these challenges that urban areas are facing, would deeply influence the mental and physical health of the urban dwellers.

However according to a growing body of scientific studies, spending time in nature, on the other hand, appears to be helpful to the health and well-being of human. Green spaces in cities can promote mental and physical health, while preventing health disorder and early moral among urban dwellers, making it a fundamental right for enhancing people's quality of life. Studies show that people who spend more hours in nature each week report higher levels of wellbeing compared to those who do not (Lydia Rivers, 2021). However finding factors that motivate urban dwellers to actively use urban green spaces, on the other hand, appears to be critical, since the existence of such areas solely would not be beneficial for human's health and well-being.

The social environment describes the structure and characteristics of relationships among people within a community and their surroundings (Salgado de Snyder *et al.*, 2011). But despite their value, public urban spaces are frequently underutilized or ignored in urban planning and development. UN-Habitat has studied the contribution of streets as public spaces on the prosperity of cities, which finds a correlation between expansive street grids and prosperity as well as developing a public space toolkit (Kim, 2015). Therefore in order to make an interactive urban area, the characteristics of the social environment, which directly affects the behavior of the users need to be studied as well.

Although the effects of urban landscape on human health and well-being is the topic that have been discussed for many times, the social aspects of urban landscape is a topic that

comparably have not been studied enough. Therefore, it is necessary for the linking relationship between urban landscape, Social environment and human health and well-being to be studied in order to deliver a better understanding of its importance for further use.

III. Methodology

As a qualitative study, the research would primarily be done through secondary literature review leading up to conducting interviews with both experts and urban dwellers. This would provide a better understanding of different characteristics of social environment in urban landscape through analyzing different view point.

Finally, by contextualizing and interpreting the collected data, major social environment indicators in urban landscape that affect citizens' health and well-being would be identified and grouped. By gaining a better understanding of the importance of those indicators, required considerations would be taken for implementing them into the future designs.

IV. Expected Result

By the link between urban landscape, social environment, and human health and well-being and the way they function in the urban setting being understood, the significance of it would be highlighted. The necessity of knowing the characteristics of urban landscape appears to be felt more than ever as the number of people living in urban areas grows. By understanding the sociological characteristics of these regions, a more dynamic urban space would be created where people would enjoy using it.

The result of this study could be used to provide a better health and well-being for urban dwellers. Creating opportunities for social engagement through community activities, shaping a sense of place by making the area a safe environment, and showcasing the urban area's historical background through urban landscape would all have a significant impact on citizens' active presence in urban areas. This could be accomplished by incorporating these characteristics into the landscape design in urban areas.

V. Conclusion

Many people are moving to larger cities, notably metropolitan cities in recent years and this trend is expected to continue. The flow would gradually result in increased urban challenges in cities, particularly those related to the health and well-being of urban dwellers.

In order to address these issues, considering the different social environment indicators of the urban areas is important. Cities that provide chances for social interactions and community engagements, appear to have an indisputable impact on citizens' mental and physical health which would result in a better health management of the urban dwellers. This shows the evident importance of applying these indicators into the urban landscape design for a higher quality of health and well-being of urban dwellers.

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